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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FORMAY 25, 2006

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for May 25, 2006. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

NTVMSNBC ONLINE: Jandarma Command, which searched a car in Mus, caught 35 trafficked people who were from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Two people caught at the site, and a third person in Istanbul in connection with the human trafficking, have all been arrested.

BOLGE: Cukurova University's faculty, Adana Bar Association members and some organizations will hold a march today in the university to protest the gun attack at the Council of State in Ankara last week.

BOLGE / SABAH (GUNEY) / ZAMAN: Former provincial chairperson of AKP Adana party organization Abdullah Dogru paid a courtesy visit to the newly elected chairperson Mustafa Attaroglu 18 days after the chairmanship elections in Adana.

SABAH (GUNEY) / BOLGE / EKSPRES: The first petroleum to travel through Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline has reached a point 40 kilometers away from the final destination. The petroleum will reach to Ceyhan in Adana on May 27.

BOLGE / EKSPRES / ZAMAN: Seyhan Mayor Azim Ozturk, responding to questions on why the women's and men's hours for using the new swimming pool in the newly opened Dream Park in Adana were separated, said that facilities in the park were arranged as tailored to feedback obtained from people in Adana.

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA) / EVRENSEL: Four hundred out of 977 cleaning services workers of the Seyhan Municipality's cleaning services subcontractor company went on a strike on May 8. The company recently decided to lay off 200 of the 400 workers who did not come to work for 15 days. Evrensel daily however claims that 670 of the workers were laid off despite the company's promise to rehire them if they signed a document indicating their repentance and requesting acceptance of their apologies from the Seyhan Mayor.

CUMHURIYET: 120 cleaning services workers of Siirt Municipality also went on a strike five days ago when the subcontractor company laid off 32 of the workers allegedly without presenting grounds for their dismissal. Meanwhile, allegations of corruption have surfaced against the Siirt Mayor Mervan Gul who had withdrawn his candidacy during 2003 by-elections to clear the path for Erdogan for premiership.

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): Malatya police seized twenty-nine

kilograms of heroin hidden in a car in the city upon receiving a tip-off that drugs would be trafficked from Van to Istanbul. Police detained one person in connection with the event and is searching for five other accomplices.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Diyarbakir's Sur Municipality Mayor Abdullah Demirbas has been acquitted by Diyarbakir 6th Court of First Instance of the charges brought against him because of a monument the municipality built in Mardin's Kiziltepe district in memory of a father and a 12-year-old child who were killed by the security officers in November 2004 in Kiziltepe.

HURRIYET / OZGUR GUNDEM: A (Turkish national) reporter from the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations working on the issue of violence against women will go to Batman to investigate causes of suicide cases that has been reported as an increasing trend in the province. Separately, Human Rights Commission of the Turkish Parliament, which arrived at Diyarbakir, will conduct studies in Sirnak and Batman.

CUMHURİYET / OZGUR GUNDEM: The Washington Times published an article on the problems of Alawis in Turkey. According to the paper, Alawis are being discriminated against in Turkey.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Houses and fields have been flooded with water in Hakkari's Yuksekova district because of the recent rainfall. Separately, authorities have been conducting damage assessment studies in Bitlis's Hizan district which was hit by a 4.8-magnitude earthquake three days ago.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Attorneys of Abdullah Ocalan appealed the decision of Ankara 11th Heavy Penalty Court which overturned the May 5-dated file of attorneys requesting retrial for Ocalan.

HURRIYET: A total of 15 students from two universities, who

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were caught in Agri's Dogubeyazit district with questionnaire forms which read, "In regard to Abdullah Ocalan as representing my political will," have been found guilty and sentenced to 10 months in prison and payment of a 500 YTL (approx. 350 USD) fine.

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